

Documents on Diplomacy: Lessons

Re-framing the Four Freedoms

Standard:

- I. Culture
- II. Time, Continuity, and Change
- III. People, Places, and Environments
- V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- IX. Global Connections
- X. Civic Ideals and Practices

Grade Level:

9–12 (dramatization and auditory learning)

Objectives:

The student will:

- Listen to FDR's 1941 address to Congress, noting the placement of the four freedoms in the speech
- Review the Four Freedoms paintings of Norman Rockwell for the application of FDR's words
- Re-frame the paintings using actual students
- Analyze the extension of these four freedoms worldwide
- Discuss ideas on the need for a fifth freedom

Time:

2 class periods

Materials:

Documents: **1941 The Four Freedoms**

Resources: *The Four Freedoms in Art*
Four Freedoms Numbers

Exercises: *A Fifth Freedom?*
Four Freedoms Listening Guide

Materials: Camera (possibly operated by school/yearbook photographer)
Fabric for use as backdrop and on table and makeshift bed (to mimic Rockwell's images)
CD/MP3 player and speakers

Procedures:

Setting the Stage

FDR's 1941 address to Congress includes many ideas that were to become key for the nation during the coming war and had universal appeal. Two years later, these "four freedoms" animated the artwork of Norman Rockwell and they resonate to this day in posters and speeches. FDR's Four Freedoms are reflected in the Atlantic Charter as well as in the charter of the United Nations.

This speech is one of FDR's best known and students will listen to it in its entirety (35 minutes) and then will "re-frame" the ideals through art activities and discussion. Finally, they will be asked whether other freedoms should be included in today's world.

Pre Activity

- 1.** Download the speech connection (<http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3320>) to a laptop so it can be played in its entirety for the class. If that is not possible, check the media center for recordings of this speech.
- 2.** Acquire some props from the theater arts room and some from the cafeteria (or let the students gather the props) for restaging the paintings of the Four Freedoms. Find a good camera that will allow the photos of the students to be transferred for printing.
- 3.** Prepare four containers—one for each painting—and label the outside with the name of the “Freedom.” Inside each container put the numbers of persons needed in the painting. For example for “Freedom of Speech” cut out numbers “1,” “2,” “3,” “4,” “5,” “6,” and “7” from the resource, *Numbers*. Each of the paintings has the number of people indicated in the painting.
 - Freedom from Want=11
 - Freedom from Fear=4
 - Freedom of Speech=10
 - Freedom of Worship=7

Day One:

- 1.** Distribute the *Listening Guide to the “Four Freedoms” Speech* and have students follow along filling in the ideas FDR presents.
- 2.** When they get to the end and they are finishing completing their sheet, hand out The “*Four Freedoms*” in Art. Ask them to look quietly at the four paintings and consider the words of FDR and how Rockwell presented the ideals. Ask them to decide which one they like best, second, etc.
- 3.** As they finish one by one ask students to come up quietly and take a number out of the container of the painting they like best. If one container empties first, they will have to choose from their second choice and so on.
- 4.** After all the numbers are distributed ask students to get in groups based on their image selection.
- 5.** Now they will look again at the picture and decide what positions they will take in their photo recreation. Give them time to discuss this group plan and what materials they will need to play the scene.
- 6.** Explain that they will be “Re-Framing” the painting just like it is painted, but with them as the everyday Americans of today in Rockwell’s scene. During the next class period, a photo will be taken with each group recreating the original painting. Direct them to bring a piece of music, appropriate for school, that fits their freedom.

- 7.** Ask them to study the paintings very carefully to see if they have discovered everything they need.

Day Two:

- 1.** Have students return to their groups and tell them the order of the photo shoots.
- 2.** Give each group a few minutes to set up their shots with their props. They should also have their music set up and ready to go.
- 3.** Require everyone to remain quiet during each photo shoot so that they can listen to the music added by each group. Re-do the shots if necessary to ensure accuracy.
- 4.** After the photo shoot is finished, have students clean-up and return to their Freedom group.
- 5.** Hand out the *Fifth Freedom Discussion Sheet* and ask them to discuss the ideals listed as a possible "Fifth Freedom" or add other terms not listed. Come to consensus in each group.
- 6.** Have each group present their selection for the Fifth Freedom and come to class consensus. (This could take some time—and some great discussion.)
- 7.** Once the decision is made, assign as homework a project to represent the chosen "freedom" artistically, using any media they wish. Give them two days or another appropriate amount of time to complete this art assignment.
- 8.** In the intervening days, the teacher will have the photos printed in 8" x 10" format and placed in a border for display. Ideally, the display will be in a place where the whole school can see the photos. (They may even go in the yearbook.)
- 9.** Once the art assignments have been completed, they too will go with the display of the "Four Freedoms Plus One."
- 10.** Have students keep the listening notes for a future lesson on Lend Lease.

Extension Activities:

- 1.** Use volunteers to stage another photo shoot for the fifth freedom based on one of the student's artistic renditions. ■